

[Raymond Richardson]

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Range-lore

Annie McAulay

Maverick, Texas

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RANGE-LORE

Raymond Richardson was born at Maverick, Runnels County Texas, in the year 1888. His parents, who were early settlers in the county were living in a dugout at the time of his birth.

Mr. Richardson tells his own story. He says, "I was born and reared in Runnels County and have lived here practically all my life. With the exception of a few months I have worked on West Texas ranches ever since I was old enough to fork a horse.

"I was born in the saddle, you might say. I began riding and helping my father and brother with the cattle some when I wasn't more than eight or nine years old. My brother Sam, older than me by several years, taught me to ride, and he taught me to ride fast and hard. He was a real good rider, and had more nerve then some of us. In fact he was a bronc buster. He contracted 2 for horses to break. He liked riding tough ones. I've sure seen him ride some mean ones. I've rode some mean ones myself but I never could get on to their tricks like he could. I believe the meanest horse I ever had any dealings with was a Spanish paint. That type was generally mean, but made good saddle horses. Well, this particular horse was sure a pitcher. He'd rear, buck, bite, paw, kick and then he'd pitch as

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high as the sky and fall back. It was pretty dangerous to tackle a mean one like that but my brother rode him.

"I believe the best all-around rider and cattle puncher I ever knew was Marvin Grimes. He was pretty good buster. In time of a stampede or working in a round-up I don't believe he could be beat. I've seen him do the work of two ordinary riders when they'd get in a tight.

"I worked on the Derricks ranch in 1903 and 1904 as a horse wrangler. That was really my first job except when working for my father. Then I got the roamin' fever and went down to Burkburnett and worked on the 6666 ranch for awhile. They worked cattle a little different there from what I had been used to. Most of the pastures were fenced, and they kept no chuck wagons. Everybody slept and ate at ranch quarters.

"I came back from the 6666's and worked for Bob Wylie on his ranch a short time, then drifted out to Midland, got a job in 1911 with the R bars outfit. I worked for them a couple of years. We made a drive to New Mexico while I was with them. There was twenty-five men in the outfit, and we were delivering 3400 head of four-year-old steers to a man at Eunice, New Mexico. 3 We had some trouble. About the worst we had was a stampede. We had camped for the night on the line of Texas and New Mexico. Sometime during the fore part of the night a thunder cloud made up over west of us. The lightning and the thunder rumbled. The boss told us all to get up and saddle our horses, and get ready to ride. All hands and the cook was out in no time. The steers was very restless. We kept right around 'em, ridin' and singing or talking to try to keep them quiet. All at once a coyote let out a howl right close that would actually make a feller feel nervous, let alone cattle. Right then some of the leaders made a break, and away went the whole shebang. They was off and so was we. We rode with them the balance of the night to try to keep them from scattering. Then daylight came I found myself seven miles from camp with seventy head of steers. We soon got 'em together and went on our way. We didn't have any more trouble to speak of after that.

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"I worked nine months on the Hats ranch in the Panhandle. The last chuck wagon work I ever did was with the Hutchison Cattle Company at Amarillo on a 168 section ranch.

"Here is the way they conducted a round-up. They'd take a designated section of the range or pasture. The range boss would instruct the men to ride to certain points, until the part he wished worked was surrounded. Then they'd ride the section until all the cattle was rounded in to where other riders were stationed to hold the cattle as they were driven in. Then they'd cut and 4 brand. If it was a large area to be worked, they'd continue with a small section until all had been covered.

"I've never known any kind of work but ranch work, but I have enjoyed it. My father was a stockman and he liked to ride. I guess it's in the blood. Give me a saddle with a good horse under me and plenty of riding. You couldn't suit me better." Range-lore

Annie McAulay

Maverick, Texas

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Raymond Richardson, Maverick, Texas, interviewed April 25, 1938.